


BROADBAND EXPANSION GRANT APPLICATION

For Fiscal Year 2022

 Public Service Commission of Wisconsin
 RECEIVED: 03/17/2022 11:02:21 AM

Primary Applicant (Name and Address): Village of Poplar 4932 S Village Rd PO Box 137 Poplar, WI 54864	Applications MUST be UPLOADED to ERF via the Commission's website, http://psc.wi.gov/apps35/ERF_upload/content/mymenu.aspx . Refer to section 2.3 for detailed instructions. Applications are due and MUST be uploaded to ERF no later than: March 17, 2022 at 4:00pm (16:00) Central Time. Late applications will not be accepted.	
	Contact for further information: PSCStatebroadbandoffice@wisconsin.gov	
	Date: December 1, 2021	
The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin is seeking applications for Broadband Expansion Grants. The Commission may award one or more grants during Fiscal Year 2022 to public and private entities that meet the eligibility requirements set forth in Wis. Stat. § 196.504. This grant round will be funded with bond proceeds authorized by the Wisconsin Building Commission pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 13.48(30). As such, successful applicants are subject to the requirements of Wis. Stat. § 13.48(30). Successful applicants will demonstrate a clear and achievable plan to improve broadband communications services in one or more underserved areas in the State.		
Applicant Certification: In signing this application, the undersigned verifies under penalty of perjury that the Applicant and its employees and agents have not, either directly or indirectly, entered into any agreement or participated in any collusion or otherwise taken any action in restraint of free competition with respect to this application; that no attempt has been made to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit an application; that this application has been independently arrived at without collusion with any other proposer, competitor or potential competitor; that this application has not been knowingly disclosed prior to the opening of applications to any other applicant or competitor; that all of the responses and representations of Applicant in this application are true and correct to the best of the undersigned's knowledge, information, and belief; and that Applicant agrees to, accepts, and will comply with all of the terms and conditions respecting this application and any award of a broadband expansion grant as may be established in a grant award Agreement.		
Name of Authorized Representative (Type or Print) Randy Jones	Title Village President	Phone (715)817-5754
Signature of Authorized Representative 	Date 2/24/2022	

SUMMARY OF GRANT APPLICATION

Primary Applicant Name Village of Poplar	Amount of Broadband Grant Request (round to nearest dollar) \$1,222,430.00		
Federal Employer Identification No. 39-6026825	Amount of Matching Funds Pledged (round to nearest dollar) \$523,899.00		
Contact Name and Title Randy Jones, Village President	Total Cost of Proposed Project (round to nearest dollar) \$1,746,346.00		
Telephone Number 715-817-5754	Project Name Village of Poplar, WI		
E-mail Address(es) ranjo@centurytel.net poplarvillage@centurytel.net Clerk	Type of Proposed Broadband Service (FTTH, Cable, DSL, etc.) FTTH		
Grant Manager, if different than Primary Applicant LTD Broadband, LLC	Type of Proposed Project (Last-mile, Middle-Mile, backbone, other) Last Mile		
Grant Manager Contact Name Corey Hauer, CEO 69 Teahouse St. Las Vegas, NV 89138	Grant Manager Email Address and Telephone Number CoreyHauer@LTDBroadband.com (507) 318-0143		
If the application proposes a public-private partnership, list the names, addresses, and FEINs of the partner companies or organizations <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> Partner Name: LTD Broadband, LLC FEIN: 45-3770932 69 Teahouse St. Las Vegas, NV 89138 </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> Partner Name: Village of Poplar FEIN: 39-6026825 4932 S Village RdPO Box 137 Poplar, WI 54864 </td> </tr> </table>		Partner Name: LTD Broadband, LLC FEIN: 45-3770932 69 Teahouse St. Las Vegas, NV 89138	Partner Name: Village of Poplar FEIN: 39-6026825 4932 S Village RdPO Box 137 Poplar, WI 54864
Partner Name: LTD Broadband, LLC FEIN: 45-3770932 69 Teahouse St. Las Vegas, NV 89138	Partner Name: Village of Poplar FEIN: 39-6026825 4932 S Village RdPO Box 137 Poplar, WI 54864		
Brief Project Description (2 sentences) LTD Fiber project will provide services to un/underserved residents and businesses in the Village of Poplar by employing Gigabit Passive Optical Network ("GPON") architecture for its FTTH network, utilizing 1 to 32 distributed splits. Each subscriber will be capable of speeds of up to 1Gbps symmetrically provided by optics that allow as much as 2.4Gbps download/1.2Gbps upload.			
Maximum Proposed Download Transmission Speed 1 Gbps	Maximum Proposed Upload Transmission Speed 1 Gbps		
Minimum Proposed Download Speed to Customer Location 100 Mbps	Minimum Proposed Upload Transmission Speed to Customer Location 100 Mbps		
County or Counties served by this project Douglas County	Community or Communities served by this project Village of Poplar, WI		
List of the Broadband Service Providers, if Any, Currently Serving the Area the Applicant Proposes to Serve The area targeted is an area listed as unserved with a minimal area designated as underserved in the rural areas of the Village of Poplar. CenturyLink is the listed provider in the unserved and underserved areas. CenturyLink does not provide broadband service capable of 10 x 1 in most areas. LTD Broadband offers a service with minimum speeds of 100 Mbps x 100 Mbps per subscribed location.			

Does proposed project serve an <u>unserved</u> area of the State, as defined in Section 1.4 of the application instruction? (yes/no) Yes	Is the Applicant certified as a Broadband Forward! Community or Telecommuter Forward! Community, or does the grant project propose to serve a Broadband Forward! Community or Telecommuter Forward! Community? (yes/no) NO
For last mile projects or component the expected number of Business Locations that will have access to the improved broadband service (i.e., total business locations passed or with new service access). 16	For last mile projects or components the expected number of Residential Locations that will have access to the improved broadband service (i.e., total residential locations passed or with new service access). 243
Of the improved business locations, how many locations are <i>unserved</i> ? 0	Of the improved residential locations, how many are <i>unserved</i> ? 0
For providers that are eligible telecommunications carriers will the proposed broadband service be available to Lifeline customers? (yes/no) YES	Are there any programs available for low-income households to access low-cost service or discounts? (yes/no) YES
Is the internet service provider currently participating in the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program? (yes/no) Yes	Is the internet service provider currently participating in the Department of Public Instruction and CESA purchasing's Digital Learning Bridge? (yes/no) No
Did the internet service provider participate in the Public Service Commission's voluntary Broadband Coverage Data Collection in 2021? (yes/no) Yes	

Summary of Project Budget and Funding

FY22 Broadband Expansion Grant Application Budget & Income Summary



Please complete this form using Microsoft Excel. A PDF copy must be attached to your application as page four. In addition, this form must also be uploaded to ERF in Excel format.

Grant Summary

Grant Applicant:	Project:
Village of Poplar, WI	Village of Poplar

Budget

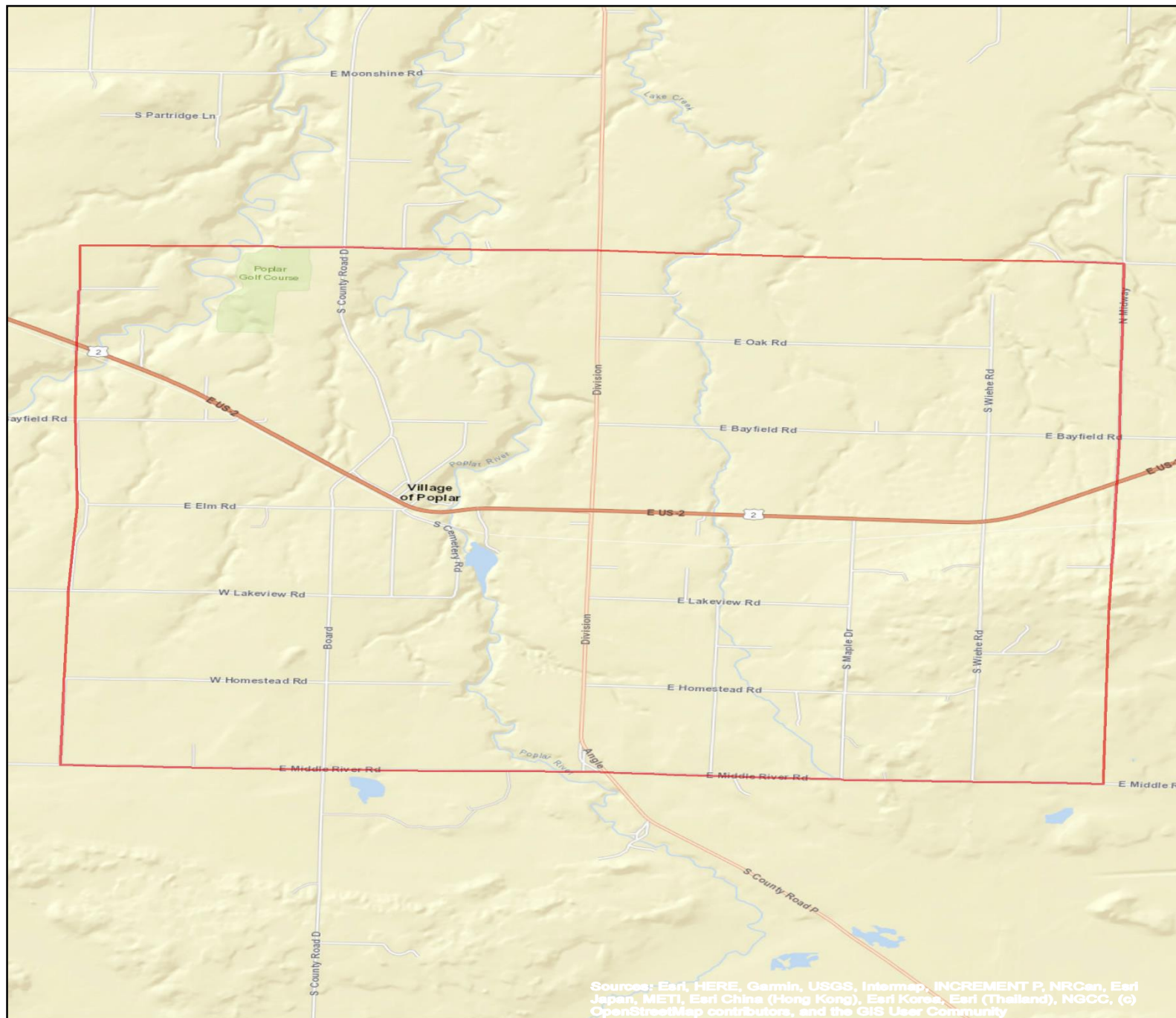
Line:	Description / Category:	Grant Funds:	Match:	Total:
1	Contractual, Consultant Fees	\$ 1,222,430.00	\$ 523,899.00	\$ 1,746,329.00
2	Equipment			\$ -
3	Supplies			\$ -
4	Labor (Salary, Fringe)			\$ -
5	Permitting, Licensing Fees			\$ -
6	Travel			\$ -
7	Other			\$ -
Total:		\$ 1,222,430.00	\$ 523,899.00	\$ 1,746,329.00
				30.0% match requested

Pledged Contributions

#:	Entity:	Entity Type:	Pledge Type:	Pledge:
1	LTD Broadband, LLC	Partner	Cash	\$ 503,899.00
2	Village of Poplar	Applicant	Cash	\$ 20,000.00
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
Total:				\$ 523,899.00

Static Map_Village of Poplar

KMZ file "FY2022_BBAppLTDBroadband_VillageofPoplar" emailed on 3/16/2022



3.2 Mandatory Application Requirements

3.2.1 Application Identification and Contact Information

The Village of Poplar has engaged in a public-private partnership with LTD Broadband, LLC to apply for the Wisconsin Broadband Expansion Grant for Fiscal Year 2022. Randy Jones, President of Village of Poplar, is the contact for the Village of Poplar located at 4932 S. Village Road, P.O. Box 137, Poplar, WI 54864. Mr. Jones's phone number is (715) 817-5754, and his email address is ranjo@centurytel.net and poplarvillage@centurytel.net (Town Clerk). LTD Broadband, LLC will be the Grant Manager for the project, and the primary project contact is Corey Hauer; his contact information is (507) 318-0143, and his email is CoreyHauer@LTDBroadband.com LTD and is located at 69 Teahouse Street, Las Vegas, 89138.ⁱ

3.2.2 Description of the Project and Scalability

- a. LTD Broadband LLC ("LTD") proposes constructing a Fiber-to-the-home network to serve more than 259 homes and businesses in the Village of Poplar, the vast majority of which lack access to even 25 Mbps service.ⁱⁱ A critical element to any rural broadband business plan is to serve residences and schools, libraries, hospitals, retailers, and other businesses in the area. Fiber offers high bandwidth, low latency, and reliability, ideal for businesses and anchor institutions. This fiber infrastructure allows businesses to locate and expand in rural communities.

The equipment strategy for this project is to deploy a Gigabit Passive Optical Network (GPON) Fiber to the Home (FTTH) solution using the Calix E7-2 platform (or comparable). Customers served by a GPON connection will have a 2.4Gbps/1.2Gbps GPON connection from the Optical Network Terminal (ONT) at their home through a 1:32 optical splitter to the serving remote Optical Line Terminal (OLT).

This GPON capacity will easily scale to provide Gigabit service for these customers. However, if more bandwidths were required, NG-PON2 or XGS-PON at 10Gbps or Point to Point 10Gbps connections or higher could be deployed on an as-needed basis over the proposed Fiber optic cable. Latency within the proposed FTTH equipment ranges from microseconds to around 3-Sms, depending on location and distance from the master node.

A centralized network operations center (NOC) is located in Blooming Prairie, MN, from which LTD Broadband ("LTD") monitors the whole of its network, including this proposed extension. LTD will deploy remote cabinets within this proposed funded service area and will feed these cabinets with 10 GB redundant transport routes to its data center in Nashville, TN. The NOC personnel and its upstream providers monitor LTD's Internet peering connections and routers to ensure redundancy and adequate bandwidth and IP addresses are available to our broadband customers. The internet transport routes can be upgraded as needed to meet expanding demand as usage grows. This network facilitates excellent response times across the network with minimal latency. Overall latency from the network edge to our Internet peering locations is typically well below 20ms.

LTD's overall service level across the complete network is a high-quality product to Wisconsin's underserved, rural area. It is comparable to Internet users in Urban or Suburban areas. Remote alarm systems monitor all sites.

This network will be well maintained and is easily upgradeable. Software upgrades for new features and patches can easily be deployed via the Calix Management System (or similar). Any service-affecting upgrades will be deployed during a maintenance window (12am - 6am) to minimize the impact on broadband customers.

LTD Broadband has spent more than ten years providing state-of-the-art wireless connections to some of the most rural communities within 750 communities and six states in which it operates. This has enabled LTD to develop a plan best suited for the citizens and businesses of Village of Poplar.

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- b. This fiber (FTTH) project for Village of Poplar serves un/underserved residents and businesses per the State of Wisconsin Broadband Map. The areas within Village of Poplar have a range of speeds that do not qualify as "Served" even areas labeled as "Served" still do not have reliable/stable internet as advertised.

LTD began by first identifying the census blocks within its proposed funded service area. Form 477 data is reported at the level of census blocks, so LTD's analysis would be conducted on a similar basis. Next, LTD referenced all Form 477 data for the blocks within its PFSA to determine a list of providers and speeds. Upon review and with local knowledge of the market, LTD found one provider operating in the market.

LTD then produced a list of addresses within its proposed funded service area, separated by census block, began qualifying service on each of the service provider websites claiming the area's serviceability. LTD Broadband confirmed the veracity of the provider's claims, confirming that no provider within the proposed funded service area is presently providing fast, reliable, stable service at or exceeding 100Mbps/20Mbps. We received letters from residents and businesses confirming the lack of fast, reliable, and regular internet service. The Village of Poplar has provided the letters and locations of each resident on the map.

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- c. There will be 243 households and 16 businesses that will receive service through this project. While there are some farms and agricultural-type buildings, we will define all the households as residential. The village has heard from many residents in this area regarding the lack of broadband. Most of the residents are year-round residents and not seasonal or tourists.

There will be 259 physical addresses that will receive service through this project. We have received letters of support from businesses stating they support broadband expansion as they currently have slowed and unreliable services. It affects their businesses, losing customers due to the inability to process credit cards purchase needed inventory. Customers are angry for waiting, and some are just leaving with purchases without paying. Reliable, high-speed internet is the

most necessary means of communication. Having limited or no access to the internet becomes a huge limitation for businesses. Businesses cannot run a business effectively without high-speed internet, thus, limiting the county's promotion of job growth and increasing tax base."

For this application, CenturyLink offers a wireline solution. They cannot provide service or broadband internet capable of 25 x 3 in the majority of the area. Very select areas are serviced by 40Mbps x 5Mbps VDSL technology. The Village of Poplar is unhappy with these services when used to work from home and for their children's virtual education needs and in-class education for homework and research after school hours from home.

d. Economic Impact and Development

Healthcare:

The residents of the Village of Poplar are served by Orthopedic & Spine Therapy, founded in Green Bay in 1990 and one of 15 locations throughout the northeast and northwest of Wisconsin. The Poplar location has been proudly providing outpatient physical therapy to area residents since 1998. As our business has moved towards electronic medical records (EMR) over the past years, having reliable internet has become increasingly important. Our staff depends on having dependable, fast internet to review patient charts, document patient visits, future schedule appointments, and process patient payments. Unfortunately, being in a small, rural community, having consistent internet has often been challenging. We often have prolonged downtime, which impacts our ability to run our business effectively and treat our patients with their care. The letter of support from Rachel Paluch stated, "Additional expansion of broadband would help the office share efficiently secure medical data across the rural locations. The expansion would also increase the patients' access to their medical providers, through telemedicine services and medical information". Without robust high-speed internet access in the communities they serve, patients will have barriers to accessing this cost-efficient and effective type of care and will not be able to realize the benefits of virtual healthcare services. The internet's role in healthcare is and will grow as healthcare evolves. For

residents to take advantage of service offerings designed to improve their health and well-being, they must have access to reliable broadband services." COVID has made it clear it is essential to be able to take care of patients in settings other than traditional medical facilities. ``

Education:

As everyone is aware, the importance of the information provided below is magnified due to Covid 19. A significant student population lives in the agricultural and rural areas in the Village of Poplar, Douglas County. Those students in K-12 would benefit by having the educational playing field leveled, allowing them to complete their homework at home and upload their assignments. The ability to perform research is also a critical component.

The School District of Maple fully supports the application process with the Wisconsin Public Service Commission to secure funding in support of broadband expansion in the Village of Poplar in Douglas County, Wisconsin. The School District of Maple provides educational services for 11 municipalities, covering 500 square miles of rural area. With an enrollment of 1300 students and employing 225 people, we are considered the largest employer in our area.

Preparing students to succeed in a global environment requires reliable access to online content. A lack of adequate access impacts students living in the rural communities of Douglas County. The efforts to increase access will address the inequities for students and families in this region. The funding would help ensure that a students' zip code doesn't impact the quality of their education. Access to online content and resources is an essential part of how students learn. The COVID 19 Pandemic made online connectivity an absolute necessity. The pandemic highlighted where efforts need to be focused."

Pricing

LTD Broadband prides itself with the ability to provide a flexible, dependable, affordable service for all its municipal, commercial, and residential customers., LTD currently has over 700 subscribers using their FTTH solution, and the count is increasing daily. LTD offers a mix of Fiber and Fixed Wireless depending on the need and environment where the subscriber is based. Today, we compete with cable companies that offer bundled services, i.e., TV, Internet, and VoIP, by providing the same or better high speeds and service options at a higher quality of service with a lower rate.

LTD Broadband, LLC Service Offerings for Village of Poplar, WI			
Business Rate Plans		Residential Rate Plans	
Speeds	Amount	Speeds	Amount
200/200 Mbps	\$95 per month	100/100 Mbps	\$70 per month
500/500 Mbps	\$115 per month	250/100 Mbps	\$80 per month
1/1 Gb	\$145 per month	500/250 Mbps	\$100 per month
		1 Gb /500 Mbps	\$130 per month
Also Includes: <i>IHN FREE (In-Home Network)</i> <i>Dedicated Support Line</i> <i>Dynamic IP Address Included</i>		Includes: <i>IHN FREE In-Home Network</i> <i>* \$99.00 - 1 Time Installation Fee</i> <i>* No Monthly Equipment fees</i> <i>**200.00 Installation fee for Additional relays to other buildings on the property</i>	

LTD is currently participating and is committed to working with Federal and Local programs for those homes and businesses to integrate affordably to the Village of Poplar and LTD Solution, providing special pricing for those unable to afford the services that will add to their quality of life and well-being. LTD Broadband participates in two Federal sponsored programs: 1. Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is an FCC benefit program passed by the US Congress on November

15, 2021, as part of the **Infrastructure Act**, to become a law that establishes a long-term solution for eligible Households with a discount on broadband services and connected devices.; 2. Lifeline Program is administered by Universal Service Administration Company (USAC) and is responsible for data collection and maintenance, support calculation, and disbursement for this low-income program.

- e. LTD Broadband project for the Village of Poplar will be targeting “Last-Mile” with fiber to the home.

f. **Technology**

LTD Broadband LLC (“LTD”) proposes a Fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) network to deliver Broadband services and will employ a Gigabit Passive Optical Network (“GPON”) architecture for its FTTH network, using 1 to 32 distributed splits.

LTD will deploy Calix E7-2 chassis within two nodes within Village of Poplar, from which it will serve its anticipated 259 funded passings. LTD plans to construct approximately 46 miles of predominately underground fiber plant from these nodes. 1:32 field splitters will be placed within hardened splice closures within clusters of served locations, called Fiber Service Areas (“FSAs”). Each FSA will require a single dedicated strand back to the node serving it and a 2.4Gbps/1.2Gbps GPON OLT port supporting its customers. Each subscriber will be capable of speeds of up to 1Gbps symmetrically.

LTD intends to employ the Calix E7-2 XGS/GPON Combo Cards. Each card supports 8 SFPs of either GPON or XGS-PON and supports 10 to 40Gbps links between cards. More critically, should bandwidth needs increase, the upgrade path from GPON to XGS-PON is straightforward.

Latency within the proposed FTTH equipment ranges from microseconds to around 3-Sms, depending on location and distance from the master node.

A centralized network operations center (NOC) is in Blooming Prairie, MN, from which LTD monitors the whole of its network, including this proposed extension. LTD will deploy remote cabinets within this proposed funded service area and will feed these cabinets with 10 GB redundant transport routes to its data center. The NOC personnel and its upstream providers monitor LTD’s Internet peering connections and routers to ensure redundancy and adequate bandwidth and IP addresses are available to our broadband customers. The internet transport routes can be upgraded as needed to meet expanding demand as usage grows. This network facilitates excellent response times across the network with minimal latency. Overall latency from the network edge to our Internet peering locations is typically well below 20ms. All transport routes and IP backhaul can be upgraded as needed to meet expanding demand as usage grows.

LTD’s proposed network will have a latency of less than 100 ms and MOS of greater than 4, utilizing GPON and XGS-PON. The actual expected latency within LTD’s networks is less than 10 ms.

- g. Middle-Mile is not proposed with this project.

- b. The Budget & Income Summary spreadsheet shows that the project's total cost is \$1,746,329.00. Village of Poplar and LTD Broadband combined match 30% of the total project; this is a total matching amount of \$523,899.00. The matching results in the total broadband fund request to also be \$1,222,430.00.
- c. The funds requested for this project will be used for the sole purpose of implementing the project defined in this application.

Matching funds of 30% will be provided by the applicant Village of Poplar and the provider LTD Broadband.

- d. The Village of Poplar and Douglas County is prepared to support this application through a contribution of \$20,000.00. Several actions document their support.
 - February 9, 2022, Village of Poplar agrees to partner with LTD Broadband LLC for the PSC State of Wisconsin for the Broadband Expansion Grant to build a comprehensive broadband network solution within the Village Poplar contingent upon the grant award.
 - October 13, 2020, Village of Poplar Board met and voted on Resolution 20-6 in support of Telecommuting Opportunities and Telecommuting Forward Certifications.
 - March 1, 2022, Village of Poplar received a letter from Mark Liebaert, Douglas County Board Chair, and Ann Doucette, Douglas County Administrator, supporting the application for broadband expansion funding/grants for the severely underserved areas in the Village of Poplar, Douglas County, Wisconsin.

Timeline

Construction Start Date: LTD is already collaborating and planning if this application is awarded. For this reason, we expect the start date to occur only days after the official award occurs.

- Months 1-6
 - LTD will work with the County to provide a streamlined process for finalizing land arrangements, acquisitions, or leases as required per site.
 - Initiate requests to schedule any required county, township, village, or city board meetings.
 - Verify and satisfy any environmental or FCC requirements.
 - Permitting will co-inside with the above.
 - Work with Stearns County and other local service groups to communicate marketing materials and timelines.
 - Equipment manufacturing and enclosures will be scheduled for production.
 - Network designs will be finalized.

- Weather and agreements permitting, installation of equipment on leased sites will commence.
- Network adjustments as required.
- Months 3-10
 - Finalize, if any, land issues and lease agreements.
 - Structure and equipment acquisitions.
 - Begin construction of rate center sites.
- Month 6-12
 - Solidify, rate centers, towers, and site preparation work finalized.
 - Collaborative marketing efforts begin with municipalities, service groups, cooperatives, and media as appropriate.
- Months 6-18
 - Site equipment installation and testing on all rate centers sites as available
 - Verify coverage maps.
- Months 6-24
 - Continue rollout of Fiber conduit, rate center sites, and customer premise equipment.
 - Identify coverage trouble areas and adjust as required.

Service availability will be rolled out over time, and the portions of Village of Poplar residents will be experiencing 1G x 1G service within the first 180 days of the grant award.

- e. There will be no adverse effect on surrounding towns and villages and will not impair other broadband service providers to extend broadband service to the towns and villages adjacent to the Village of Poplar.

3.2.5 Other Information

a. LTD Broadband, LLC Experience

LTD Broadband was founded in 2011 to bring reliable, affordable broadband in rural and urban areas. Since its inception, LTD Broadband has grown to service over 17,000 subscribers and currently serves the upper Midwest in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. Servicing territories covers over 50,000 square miles and 2,500 towers in over 750 cities. LTD Broadband LLC is a well-established and long-term friend and customer of MBT Bank. The LTD Broadband has the financial ability to fully fund the proposed project scope of the Village of Poplar Project.

LTD has made the expansion of broadband internet access a top priority to encourage economic development, attract new residents, enhance residents' education and healthcare, improving the overall quality of life over the years. LTD continues to develop broadband and actively seeks out grants to aid in our pursuit. LTD was awarded and completed a CAF II project four years ahead of schedule. LTD has mastered the ability to conceptualize, plan and develop, build, manage multiple projects, and scale operations through small and large projects through grant projects and rural and urban projects.

The success of LTD is due to the solid and deep Partnerships with the Executive Team that is the driving force behind the current and future success of the company.

Corey Hauer, CEO

Hauer, Founder of LTD Broadband, studied Computer and Electrical Engineering at Purdue University. Hauer holds over 25 years of experience in building companies and systems focused on broadband networks. Multiple telecommunication firms, hospitality businesses, wireless ISPs, regional airlines, law firms, and manufacturers have sought to consult engagements from Hauer on deploying innovative technologies.

Frank E. Glaszner, COO

Frank brings over 18 years of telecommunication and technology experience to the table. In addition, he brings 25 years of experience as a resourceful and strategic sales executive as a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt (ICBB), his ability to adapt to any environment and produce results utilizing his vision for process, precision, systematic, and methodical approaches is unparalleled.

Within the telecommunication and technology industry, his vast knowledge has assisted several companies in implementing sales methodology to yield record results and solutions sales, business development, channel development, sales management, WAN/LAN Design, and Telephony & Data Liaison.

Ira Levy, CFO

In addition to a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance from the University of Florida and a Master's Degree in Accountancy from the University of Houston. Ira has extensive Wireless Telecommunications (Top 4 carrier, MVNO, DAS, Small Cell, Service Provider), FinTech, e-commerce, and SaaS industry experience, having served in senior-level financial leadership positions at MetroPCS Verizon Wireless, T-Mobile, AT&T, iWireless, Connectivity Wireless, and Mozido.

Ira has raised over \$3 billion in private equity and private and public debt transactions and served in a leading role in a successful IPO. He possesses deep subject matter expertise in all corporate finance disciplines, including capital structuring and fundraising, contract negotiations, business intelligence and analysis, business planning, treasury, and revenue assurance. Ira has led multiple successful M&A transactions on both the buy and sell-side and served as a Board Director for the Association of Financial Professionals.

ⁱ Refer to pages 1,2,3

ⁱⁱ Map on page 5

Items Supporting the Application

- Item 1: Memorandum of Understanding – Partnership
- Item 2: Village of Poplar Contribution Letter
- Item 3: Resolution 20-6
- Item 4: Support from Douglas County
- Item 5: Map of Residents and Business
- Item 6: Letters of Support

Village of Poplar
And
LTD Broadband LLC

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

WHEREAS: Village of Poplar has agreed to partner with LTD Broadband LLC, 78053 MN 251, Clarks Grove, MN 56016 for a Village of Poplar fiber to the home (FTTH) broadband grant proposal that will be submitted by LTD Broadband LLC to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW) Broadband Expansion Program for the Fiscal year 2022, 2023 grant cycle.

WHEREAS, the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW) Broadband Expansion program is available to eligible applicants; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Poplar understand that the majority of the targeted areas included in the grant proposal are unserved or underserved meaning they do not get download speeds meeting 25 Mbps and 3 Mbps upload speeds put forth by the FCC ruling of 2017 and is working in partnership with LTD Broadband LLC to improve broadband in those areas and across the Village of Poplar; and

WHEREAS, LTD Broadband LLC will compile a competitive Broadband Expansion application(s) to provide badly needed broadband services to homeowners and businesses in the identified areas. LTD Broadband LLC's engineering experts will design, build, and operate the proposed network within those areas.

WHEREAS, LTD Broadband LLC will work with County, Cities, Villages and Townships located in Village of Poplar to obtain easements and permits on and across and into the indicated properties to engage activities to construct the project in compliance with all existing rules and regulations; and

WHEREAS, The Broadband Expansion grant process is extremely competitive; and applications that demonstrate a public private partnership are evaluated higher than those that do not; and

WHEREAS, the broadband in Village of Poplar is a vitally important topic at the Head of Local Government sessions in recent months and the last two years as the country tries to navigate Covid-19 and operating remotely relying on broadband.

WHEREAS, letters of support to collaborate are being received from local municipalities and businesses that may receive benefits from the application, contingent upon grant approval.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Village of Poplar agrees to partner with LTD Broadband LLC for the Wisconsin Public Service Commission for the purpose of building a comprehensive broadband network solution within the Village of Poplar contingent upon the grant award.

Submitted this day 9th of February, 2022.

LTD Broadband LLC

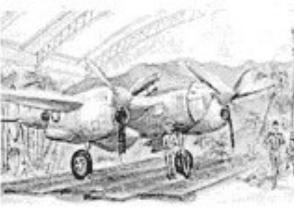
By (Print): Corey Hauer

By (Signature): Corey Hauer, CEO

Village of Poplar President

By (Print): Randy Jones

By (Signature): Randy Jones



Village of Poplar

Wisconsin



Randy Jones
President

PO Box 137
Poplar, WI 54864
715-364-8589

Gina Ormond
Clerk/ Treasurer

March 16, 2022

LTD Broadband LLC
78053 MN 251
Clarks Grove, MN 56016

To Whom It May Concern,

The Village of Poplar is willing to contribute \$20,000 towards the grant application to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin as discussed at the village board meeting of March 8th, 2022. The Village of Poplar is planning to contribute \$10,000 with a matching amount of \$10,000 from Douglas County that has yet to be confirmed. Should the county be unable to contribute the matching funds the village will contribute the additional \$10,000 needed to make up the entire \$20,000 committed to this effort.

The Village of Poplar has approved by resolution dated February 9th, 2022, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) stating among other things that the Village of Poplar is partnering with LTD Broadband LLC for a fiber to the home (FTTH) broadband grant proposal that will be submitted to the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSCW) for the purpose of building a comprehensive broadband network solution within the Village of Poplar for the fiscal year 2022, 2023 grant cycle and potentially in the future.

Thank You

Sincerely

Randy Jones
Village President
Village of Poplar
Douglas County
Wisconsin

RESOLUTION 20-6

IN SUPPORT OF TELECOMMUTING OPPORTUNITIES AND TELECOMMUTER FORWARD CERTIFICATION

AT A MEETING OF THE VILLAGE OF POPLAR BOARD HELD AT THE POPLAR VILLAGE HALL, ON October 13, 2020

RESOLUTION - IN SUPPORT OF TELECOMMUTING OPPORTUNITIES AND TELECOMMUTER FORWARD CERTIFICATION.

WHEREAS, the Village of Poplar supports and commits to promote the availability of telecommuting options;

WHEREAS, the Village of Poplar hereby appoints Randy Jones - Communication Coordinator as the single point of contact for coordinating telecommuting opportunities within the Village of Poplar including the following responsibilities:

- 1. Coordination and partnership with broadband providers, Realtors, economic development professionals, employers, employees, and other telecommuting stakeholders.**
- 2. Collaboration with broadband providers and employers to identify, develop, and market telecommuter-capable broadband packages.**
- 3. Communication and partnership with broadband providers and economic development professionals to develop common goals.**
- 4. Promotion of telecommuter-friendly workspaces, such as business incubators with telecommuting spaces, if such a workspace has been established in the political subdivision at the time the political subdivision adopts the resolution.**
- 5. Familiarity with broadband mapping tools and other state level resources.**
- 6. Maintaining regular communications with the state broadband office.**
- 7. Making regular reports to the Poplar Village Board.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY PROCLAIMED by the Village of Poplar to support telecommuting opportunities for the Village of Poplar in its application for Telecommuter Forward! Community certification.

Dated: October 13, 2020

Randy Jones
Dina Demond, Clerk



DOUGLAS COUNTY

COUNTY BOARD CHAIR

Mark Liebaert

1316 N. 14th Street Suite 301

Superior, WI 54880

(715) 395-1493 Home (715) 398-5234 Fax (715) 395-1312

DOUGLAS COUNTY MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Douglas County is to provide cost-effective services, with equal access to all citizens; to continue and enhance partnerships; to responsibly manage our resources and plan for the future.

March 1st, 2022

Randy Jones

Village of Poplar, President

10215 E Lakeview Rd.

Poplar, WI 54864

RE: Wisconsin Broadband Expansion Grant 2022

I, Mark Liebaert, Chairman of the Douglas County, Wisconsin Board of Supervisors, along with County Administrator, Ann Doucette, strongly support the application for broadband expansion funding/grants for the severely underserved areas in the Village of Poplar, Douglas County, Wisconsin.

Broadband (high speed internet access) is vital to our local businesses and residents. High speed internet infrastructure is a tool that all citizens, residents, and businesses need to engage in the educational, economic, and civic pursuits that are critical to a future of equity and opportunity for all concerned.

We are writing this letter of support in favor of the application process with the Wisconsin Public Service Commission to secure funding in support of broadband expansion in Douglas County. Access to online content and resources is an essential part of commerce in today's world; a lack of adequate access impacts our citizens living in rural communities throughout Douglas County. The efforts to increase access will address inequities that exist for families in this region. Securing funding for broadband expansion would help ensure one's location does not impact their ability to live, work, learn or grow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mark Liebaert", written over a horizontal line.

Mark Liebaert, Douglas County Board Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ann Doucette", written over a horizontal line.

Ann Doucette, Douglas County Administrator

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MAPLE

"LEADERS AND LEARNERS, TODAY AND TOMORROW"

P.O. BOX 188 • 4751 SOUTH COUNTY HIGHWAY F • MAPLE WI 54854-0188

OFFICE: 715-363-2431 • FAX: 715-363-2191

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LAKE NEBAGAMON

LAKESIDE

MAPLE

POPLAR



February 18, 2022

LTD Broadband, LLC
Corey Hauer, CEO
P.O. Box 3064
Blooming Prairie, MN 55917

RE: Wisconsin Broadband Expansion Grant 2022

Dear Corey:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the School District of Maple in full support of the application process with the Wisconsin Public Service Commission to secure funding in support of broadband expansion in the Village of Poplar in Douglas County, Wisconsin. The School District of Maple provides educational services for 11 municipalities, covering 500 square miles of rural area. The enrollment of 1300 students and employing 225 people we are considered the largest employer in our area.

The education landscape continues to evolve. Preparing students to succeed in the global environment requires reliable access to online content. All of our major curriculum now has online content and expansion activities that require high speed internet access. A lack of adequate access impacts students living in the rural communities of Poplar. The efforts to increase access will address the inequities that exist for students and families in this region. The funding would help ensure that a student's zip code does not impact the quality of access to their education.

Access to online content and resources is an essential part of how students learn. The Covid-19 Pandemic made online connectivity and absolute necessity when we had to move to 100% online learning. The pandemic highlighted where efforts need to be focused. I hope that broadband funding from the Wisconsin Public Service Commission will address this critical area to serve students best.

I strongly support the application for broadband expansion funding for the underserved areas in the Village of Poplar, Douglas County, Wisconsin.

Respectfully yours,

Dr. Sara L. Croney

Dr. Sara L. Croney
Superintendent

SLC:psj

Randy

From: Village of Poplar Clerk <poplarvillage@centurytel.net>
Sent: Tuesday, March 1, 2022 9:54 AM
To: 'Randy Jones'
Subject: FW: Broadband support

FYI ☺

From: Rachel Paluch [mailto:RPaluch@ostpt.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 1, 2022 9:09 AM
To: ranjo@centurytel.net; poplarvillage@centurytel.net
Cc: OST Poplar <ostpoplar@ostpt.com>
Subject: Broadband support

Hi Randy,

The staff in our Poplar office of Orthopedic & Spine Therapy forwarded me your Facebook post seeking letters of support in your efforts to obtain a broadband grant for improved internet in Poplar.

Orthopedic & Spine Therapy was founded in Green Bay in 1990 and now has 15 locations throughout northeast and northwest Wisconsin. Our Poplar location has been proudly providing outpatient physical therapy to area residents since 1998. As our business has moved towards electronic medical records (EMR) over the past years, having reliable internet has become increasingly important. Our staff depends on having dependable, fast internet in order to review patient charts, document on patient visits, schedule future appointments, and process patient payments. Unfortunately, being in a small, rural community, having consistent internet has often been a challenge. We often have downtime or very slow internet which impacts our ability to run our business effectively and treat our patients with the care they deserve. If the Poplar community were able to obtain a broadband grant for improved internet, it would greatly enhance our business and our ability to serve our patients.

Please let me know if you need additional information or have any questions.

We sincerely appreciate your efforts and hope the grant is successful!

Thanks,
Rachel





Kimberly Young <kimberly.young@ltdbroadband.com>

More letters of support

1 message

Randy <ranjo@centurytel.net>

Tue, Mar 8, 2022 at 1:51 PM

To: Kimberly Young <kimberly.young@ltdbroadband.com>

Cc: "Gina Ormond, Village of Poplar Clerk" <poplarvillage@centurytel.net>

Hi Kimberly,

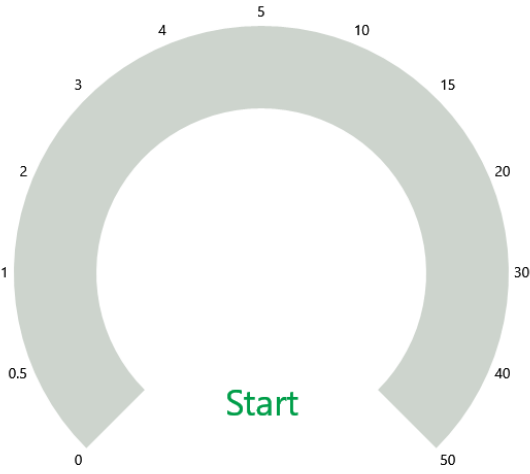
Attached are three more letters in support of our broadband efforts. I know that some don't show addresses but I know that they are all in or adjacent to Poplar.

Also pasted below is a screen shot of my network speed test taken moments ago. There are some places that are a little better than this and some that are worse. This is actually pretty good for me here as this was one of the better results. Last weekend I was without internet for the better part of three days or connected for only seconds before being disconnected again. Many of my neighbors had similar experiences.

I would like to get some more information about how the LTD system works and what kind of speeds that we can expect. Maybe some literature or public information that I can share.

Network Speed Test

Test your network



Current network

Connection type
Ethernet

Internet status
Internet access

Host name
rj-asus

History

Network	Date	Delay	Download	Upload
Ethernet	3/8/2022	93 ms	4.01 Mbps	0.59 Mbps
Ethernet	2/28/2022	87 ms	4.02 Mbps	0.51 Mbps
Ethernet	2/28/2022	87 ms	4.02 Mbps	0.51 Mbps
Ethernet	2/28/2022	88 ms	4.03 Mbps	0.57 Mbps
Ethernet	2/28/2022	87 ms	4.06 Mbps	0.48 Mbps
Ethernet	2/28/2022	87 ms	3.97 Mbps	0.52 Mbps
Ethernet	2/9/2022	108 ms	2.49 Mbps	0.42 Mbps
Ethernet	2/9/2022	80 ms	4.49 Mbps	0.33 Mbps
Ethernet	2/8/2022	84 ms	2.88 Mbps	0.35 Mbps
Ethernet	1/31/2022	81 ms	4.30 Mbps	0.46 Mbps
Ethernet	1/28/2022	81 ms	4.29 Mbps	0.30 Mbps
Ethernet	1/21/2022	80 ms	4.39 Mbps	0.37 Mbps
Ethernet	1/20/2022	81 ms	4.61 Mbps	0.33 Mbps
Ethernet	1/17/2022	80 ms	4.59 Mbps	0.45 Mbps
Ethernet	1/14/2022	80 ms	4.40 Mbps	0.46 Mbps

Thank You

Randy Jones
Village President
Sewer Commission Chair
Wastewater Operator
Village of Poplar
ranjo@centurytel.net
715-817-5754

- 3 attachments
-  **Jim Tollas.pdf**
104K
-  **Laina Styba.pdf**
109K
-  **Angie Knutson.pdf**
106K

Randy

From: Brian Johnson <bjohnson94260@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, February 25, 2022 6:46 PM
To: ranjo@centurytel.net
Subject: Broadband support

Hello, My name is Brian Johnson and I have lived in this area my whole life. I have found that our internet service is much less reliable than many other places that I have been and worked. My internet has been plagued with problems like completely dropping out when it rains. Also a number of times our personal number has dialed 911 and the sheriffs department have been sent to our home to see why we called them.

I am a business owner, Church Chair of one of our local churches, Mission Covenant and also a school board director at the Maple School District. We have needed better services at every one of those places for a long time.

Brian M Johnson

Sent from my iPhone

Randy

From: Chris Olson <olsonct.co@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 8:21 PM
To: ranjo@centurytel.net
Subject: Poplar Internet Access (W/ Speed Test Info)
Attachments: Speed Test 3.9.22 817PM.JPG

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a Poplar, WI resident with four children; three in elementary and one in middle school. My childrens' school work is increasingly more reliant upon having a modern and reliable high-speed internet connection. My wife and I both have jobs that require us to work from home at times. I also run a small business and require internet access to maintain a website and communicate with customers.

The quality of internet currently provided by the area's only service provider, Century Link, is simply unacceptable. My maximum available download speed is 4.47mbps, and 0.46mbps upload. I have attached a screenshot of a speed test, conducted 3/9/22 at 8:17 PM. Century link has indicated there are no plans to improve service in my area. Additionally, I believe Century Link is price gouging and exploiting their customers as they have no viable competition at many residential properties, including mine, in the area. Additionally, I have reviewed the State of Wisconsin broadband map, which falsely shows that I have high-speed internet (25mbps or more download) available at my address. I have to assume that Century Link has overstated the quality of service available at my address in order for the state map to indicate I have a legitimate high-speed service option available. Additionally, Century Link's customer service sets the bar for poor support and responsiveness.

In summary, a quality high-speed internet access has become an essential utility. Our current poor service makes working from home almost impossible and very inefficient. Kids have to take turns in some situations to view and upload content for school. Maintaining my business website is a challenge due to uploads timing-out as the result of virtually unusable upload bandwidth.

The Poplar community and surrounding area would benefit greatly from a new high-speed internet service provider. I fully support the Village of Poplar investing directly, and seeking state, federal, and private funds to bring new internet infrastructure to the community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Christopher Olson
10212 E Lakeview Rd
Poplar, WI 54864
715-815-0766

Randy

From: Gina Stowers <mgstowin@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 26, 2022 6:24 AM
To: ranjo@centurytel.net
Subject: Broadband

Internet just cuts out ,things will not load ,if we have on more than 2 devices at a time no service at all ,if I turn on the WiFi on my iPad or my husband I phone the WiFi completely shuts down all other devices , the tv WiFi will not work if more than one device is on ,we can never have WiFi on our phones or iPads ,century link told us to only use two devices at a time on WiFi that way it won't cut out ,so now I pay for an internet I can't use fully lol ,I do inhome daycare so I need better internet and I'm also visually impaired so I need my iPad to work for me with WiFi I depend on my iPad it is my eyes in a way. Also really no reception on Sunday afternoons lol thanks randy , Gina Stowers

Sent from my iPad gina Stowers

Randy

From: Jason Nelson <jnelson@4wp.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 5, 2021 2:26 PM
To: ranjo@centurytel.net
Subject: Thanks!!

Hi Randy,

Thank you very much for your prompt support today on the sewer issue I was having. Outstanding customer service!!!

I also wanted to express my support for trying to upgrade the internet service in the Poplar area so we can be competitive with other rural areas of the country. COVID has greatly accelerated the need for increased speeds as working from home or hybrid solutions become the work force of the future. If we want our area to be able to attract people looking to migrate out of urban areas this will be a definite need in the future.

My families situation is a perfect example: My wife has worked from our home office in multiple Midwest states as a Principal Biostatistician for medical device companies. She needs high speed internet to process statistical analysis and interact with her clients via Zoom meetings. It was my sons first year of college this year at UMD and due to COVID he did 90% of his classes on line in our home. Lastly, I am Vice President of Engineering & Operations at Transamerican Auto Parts in Los Angeles California. Prior to COVID I was travelling to California 3 out of 4 weeks per month but this past year was able to work 100% from home. My company will be moving to a hybrid workforce model in July which means I will only need to travel 1-2 weeks per month and can work more from home. That being said we had a tremendous increase in internet usage in 2020 and expect it to remain heightened for years to come. Our current download speed is typically 20Mbps and upload speed .3Mbps which has caused many difficulties this year for us when trying to video conference on our competing meetings.

The world is on an accelerated pace of change due to the pandemic and it would be advantageous to find a way to invest and set the Poplar WI area up for success.

Best Regards,

Jason Nelson & Teresa Nelson

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Randy

From: John Lundeen <jlundeen@centurytel.net>
Sent: Friday, February 25, 2022 4:38 PM
To: ranjo@centurytel.net
Subject: Broadband Support

My husband & I would love to have improved internet service here. We live on the south side of Poplar & have sketchy service at best. We can't be on the computer & stream movies off Netflix at the same time. The time it takes to download from our phone takes forever. It was just last week my sister sent me pictures that took a whole day to download. So yes definitely add our name to the list of customers in need of faster service.

John & Yvonne Lundeen

Sent from my iPhone

Randy

From: Village of Poplar Clerk <poplarvillage@centurytel.net>
Sent: Saturday, February 26, 2022 10:21 AM
To: 'Randy Jones'
Subject: FW: Broadband Support

FYI

From: Kevin [mailto:konakev@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, February 25, 2022 7:51 PM
To: poplarvillage@centurytel.net
Subject: Broadband Support

Dear Sir/Madam,

Poplar, WI is a great place to live EXCEPT for the lack of reliable and adequate internet. It is a great source of continual frustration and is a reason for people to not want to live/stay here. I implore you to help our small community get more reliable and faster internet.

Thank you for your considering this.

Kevin Orme, CPA

Randy Jones

To: Randy Jones (ranjo@centurytel.net)
Subject: FW: Poplar Wi Internet Service

From: Kim Kelly <kimkelly52@yahoo.com>
Date: May 11, 2021 at 2:18:04 PM CDT
To: ranjo@centurytel.net
Subject: Poplar Wi Internet Service

-----=_Part_1269001_1099551526.1620760045277
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=UTF-8
Content-Transfer-Encoding: quoted-printable

Hello:

As the Village of Poplar President, I thought you would be the right person

to contact regarding my concerns about Internet Services in Poplar, WI. Prior to recently retiring, I worked remotely for 18 months for United Health Care.

This position demanded a higher level of home internet service to enable to me to

actually work from home. While the Internet Service at my home in Poplar worked

well most of the time, about once a week I would experience "outages" and random

disconnects as I simultaneously accessed seven programs at a time and held important

financial conversations with UHC members. This was immensely frustrating for myself as well as the members.

In these difficult times of chaos and confusion, we are lucky to be able to

"work from home". However, it is more important than ever that, technologically,

we are able to do so. Therefore, I support any effort on your part to bring the best

Internet Services to our area.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Kim Kelly

Randy

From: Ronchi, Laura <LRONCHI@amfam.com>
Sent: Monday, February 28, 2022 8:45 AM
To: ranjo@centurytel.net
Subject: Broadband Support

Hi Randy,

Thank you for working on this. The Lord knows we need some options for internet!!

Lori

February 28, 2022

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Lori Ronchi and I live in the Town of Lakeside, near Poplar, WI. I am a business owner and a mom who is very frustrated with the lack of options for faster internet in our area. Right now, our only option is CenturyTel and we pay quite a bit for gigs we never receive. We are interrupted several times a week while trying to work, stream movies, do schoolwork, etc. not to mention complete days where we have no service at all happening at least one day a month.

The pandemic really showed people how we can do things differently. Anyone who works in the corporate world knows how things are shifting to employees wanting to work from home. Employers are able to hire talent from anywhere in the nation, if they have the proper tools to work from home. I would love to see residents from our area have the same opportunity most of the country has in that regard. Also, as a businessowner, It would be nice to join the rest of the world who are easily meeting with customers via Zoom or other online platforms without questioning if the connection will remain in place.

Please consider expanding broadband to Northern rural Wisconsin. Thank you.

Lori Ronchi

American Family Insurance Company | American Family Life Insurance Company | American Family Mutual Insurance Company, S.I. | American Standard Insurance Company of Ohio

American Standard Insurance Company of Wisconsin | Home Office - 6000 American Parkway Madison, WI 53783

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Randy

From: Marissa Delvas <delvasmr@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 25, 2022 3:09 PM
To: ranjo@centurytel.net
Subject: Broadband support

Hello my Name is Marissa Delvas, I live in Poplar Wi on Oak road. My family the Hurshes, have been a part of the poplar community since before I was born. My uncles own Hursh meats and rely on internet to update their sales and orders from people. I am also starting a small business as a virtual health and wellness coach. The broadband Grant would greatly improve my families small businesses and well as bring more opportunities for us to grow and reach new customers. Since I was a child the internet in Poplar has been a problem. And when I heard that schooling was moving online at the start of the pandemic I panicked for the children in Poplar that would have to try to keep up. Please consider our small town for this grant, the Poplar people are worth it.

Sincerely,

Marissa Delvas
Health Coach

Randy

From: Reed Alexson <reed.alexson@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 10, 2022 11:09 AM
To: Randy Jones; Randy Jones
Subject: Broadband in Poplar, WI

Village of Poplar
Randy Jones, President

I just want to state that our Internet service in Poplar has been poor at best over the course of the last twenty-two years that I have lived in Poplar, Wisconsin.

In order for Poplar to grow and prosper, I feel that a broadband service would keep our community growing with the times and encourage people and businesses to come to live and work in Poplar.

I previously owned and operated Poplar Building Supply, Inc for over twenty years and experienced constant Internet problems while operating our business.

I encourage anything that might help to bring Broadband Internet service to Poplar.

Thank you - Reed Alexson

Randy

From: ladyjkey J <ladyjkey@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 25, 2022 6:28 PM
To: ranjo@centurytel.net
Subject: Broadband support

To whom it may concern:

I support faster, more reliable broadband for the Poplar area. I live just across the street from the village of Poplar and would live a reliable internet service. I run a business from my home, as well as telework 50-75% of my time, I have a family that enjoys their streaming. We currently use our cell service, but that is not always the most reliable. Please consider helping rural America achieve greatness through broadband access.

Terri Jicha
GOLF COURSE ROAD
POPLAR, WI